

Meeting Summary
Hood Canal Environmental Achievement Awards and Conference
The Inn at Port Hadlock, 310 Hadlock Bay Rd., Port Hadlock, WA
November 7, 2008; 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM

Summary of Discussion

An HCCC proposal for a “coordinated response” in Hood Canal was reviewed and discussed at the afternoon session of the Hood Canal Environmental Achievement Awards and Conference on November 7, 2008 at the Inn at Port Hadlock. In general, the proposal was viewed positively and participants in the discussion had no objections. One attendee did express concern that specific topic forums were not needed, although he did agree that coordination and policy consistency was a need that could be addressed by the HCCC. Participants asked about the capacity of the Coordinating Council to manage multiple forums. Executive Director Scott Brewer explained that the Council does have capacity, although limited, through existing staff funding provided through the aquatic rehabilitation legislation. The discussion resulted in a model for how individual topic forums will be conducted based on needs and priorities identified in broader regional strategies.

I. DISCUSSION

The majority of the discussion centered around how to make the forum approach successful, what outcomes this approach should generate, and what topics the forums should address.

Discussion points:

1. What will help to make a Coordinated Response Successful?
 - a. Involve:
 - i. Community/watersheds groups in the process given that they understand local concerns and problems. Their participation in policy or technical forums will be critical.
 - ii. The City of Port Townsend because they are a critical decision-maker in the Hood Canal Action Area and should be consulted regarding policy implementation.
 - iii. Landowners as their involvement and support is critical to the restoration of Hood Canal.
 - iv. The Public to get citizen support and engage the broad community. Groups like HCWEN should be utilized to get provide information and public outreach.
 - v. Policymakers in forum discussions.
 - b. Stable funding is needed, although a way forward must be found even if consistent funding is not available.
 - c. Ensure a science-based approach to address the problems in Hood Canal and analyze data.
 - d. Schedule a workshop so that partners can come to an agreement on a consistent message to deliver to the public before the forums are launched.
 - e. The groups and individuals in Hood Canal are geographically split up and it can be difficult to get everyone together. The Council should decide who should be at the meeting to get a good cross section of opinions.
 - f. A good model is the Summer Chum process. It worked well because it enabled groups at the ground level to accomplish things without being directed about how that happened.
 - g. Coordinate with the Puget Sound Partnership and align with its objectives.
 - h. Use information on current efforts underway compiled through the Partnership’s Inventory process.
 - i. Each forum should be clear as to its intention -it will be important to decide if these forums will serve as another planning layer, communication layer or a policy/implementation layer.
2. What Outcomes Should be Generated by this Approach?
 - a. A prioritized list is created outlining what needs to be done in Hood Canal from top to bottom. Items from the list are then matched with funding provided by the Puget Sound Partnership and other sources.

b. Planners and commissioners identify inconsistencies in policies and regulations in Hood Canal and suggest changes. There are different policies across the Counties in Hood Canal and it might be beneficial to implement more consistent policies across the watershed. Another participant stated that there are some good reasons for different policies in different Counties and that each County is unique (including the Growth Management Act and local conditions).

c. Missing information is identified regarding how well regulations are implemented across Hood Canal.

d. Monitoring information is presented to policy makers to help shape legislation.

e. There is not another layer of "bureaucracy."

f. A unified approach is taken. For example, the decision to implement the Shorebank loan program was signed by an interagency agreement and has been very successful. All members of the Coordinating Council and their governments backed the program and they had a common understanding of the relevant land use issues.

g. Forum efforts and recommendations are aligned with the objectives of the Puget Sound Partnership and the Action Agenda.

h. The aquatic rehabilitation zone legislation is utilized well.

3. What Topics should be considered? (Answers in no particular order)

a. A forum might be needed to choose which forums topics are top priorities.

b. HCDOP findings

c. Summer Chum

d. Community outreach and education messages and efforts

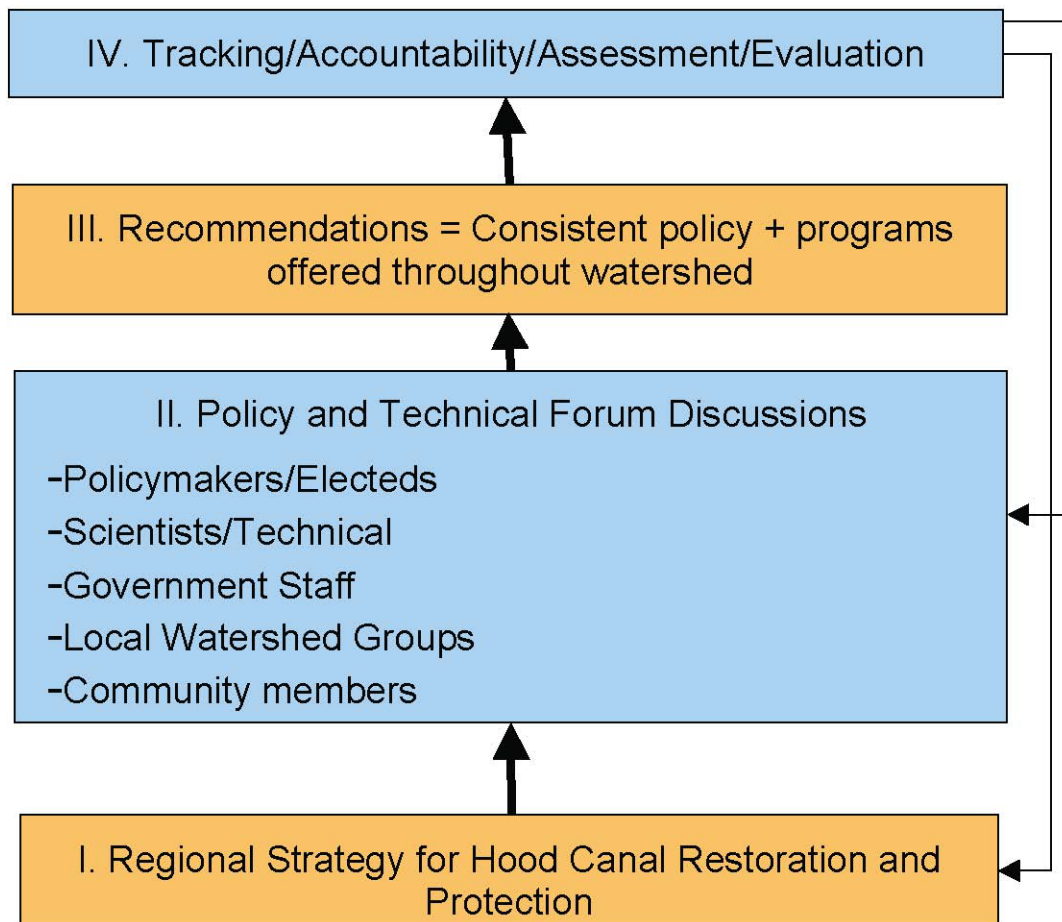
e. Septic systems

f. Brinnon Resort

g. Coordination of Environmental Impact Statements

h. Stormwater

The discussion resulted in a recommendation for a four part approach, with a feed back component, to coordination to be managed by the Hood Canal Coordinating Council: (see next page)



I. Regional Strategy: There are several existing sources of information that can be used to form the basis of a Regional Strategy for the Restoration and Protection of Hood Canal. This includes WRIA Plans and other local restoration plans, the 2008 HCDOP report and findings on low dissolved oxygen, the Summer Chum Recovery Plan, and others. The content of all of these is currently being “rolled-up” within the Puget Sound Action Agenda.

II. Policy and Technical Forums: Based on priorities identified in the Hood Canal regional strategy, the HCCC would host policy and/or technical forums in order to develop recommendations that would be implemented by Hood Canal jurisdictions in a manner that fits local conditions and GMA requirements. Policy level and community involvement in the forum discussions would be needed to ensure a successful implementation. Each forum would work toward:

- a. Prioritization of actions
- b. Dissemination of information produced
- c. Establishment of a mechanism for tracking and accountability
- d. Funding to support actions
- e. Public education and outreach

One example would be a technical forum to discuss the findings of the Hood Canal Dissolved Oxygen Program. Scientists would be brought together to discuss the findings and make recommendations. The technical forum participants would then bring the recommendations to a policy forum or to the Hood

Canal Coordinating Council itself for further consideration and action.

- III. Recommendations: Each Hood Canal jurisdiction would implement the forum recommendations in a manner that fits local conditions, funding availability and GMA requirements. The goal is to establish a consistent effort around the Canal on key issues and priority needs, recognizing that local differences and varied approaches may be required to achieve the same ends.
- IV. Tracking/Accountability/Assessment/Evaluation: This was discussed both as a need for each forum to establish and a role that the HCCC could play overall.